THE QUALITY OF NEWLY LOCAL CONTENT BASED INSTRUCTIONAL READING MATERIALS FOR SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to analyze the quality of advanced local content-based instructional reading material. It was ten descriptive texts and a reading comprehension test with the topic focused on Bangka Island tourism places. The developed product was specially constructed by considering the reading level of senior high school students in Pangkalpinang, Indonesia, which is identified at level four. The quality of the product reflects on its effectiveness and criterion-related validity. The point is determined from students' scores on the reading comprehension test administered after they have been taught using the developed product in 6 meeting sessions. The criterion-related validity of developed reading comprehension was recognized by measuring the correlation between students' scores on progressive reading comprehension tests and their scores on standardized reading level tests. Based on the result, the developed product can be considered adequate because 35 students (85.36%) out of 41 students in reading comprehension test accomplished the minimum mastery criterion, which was 70. The product was also considered good in terms of its criterion-related validity because the correlation coefficient was 0.618. Since findings show that the developed local content-based instructional reading materials are effective and valid, it can conclude that the developed product has good quality when used as instructional reading materials for senior high school students.

Keywords: Instructional Reading Materials, Local Content, Senior High School Students

INTRODUCTION

In the modern world, reading is one of the most critical skills to acquire knowledge. According to Setiyadi et al., (2019), reading is a thinking process. It is the process of understanding the written text and understanding an idea. Understanding a written text means extracting the required information from it as efficiently as possible. Reading is a fluent process of readers combining data from the text and their background knowledge to build meaning. The result of the reader's interactions, the text, the activity, and the larger sociocultural context is known as reading comprehension (Frankel et al., 2016). Besides, reading is a process where readers try to construct new meanings by using their background knowledge to understand what the text contains. It can also emphasize specific topics and any changes to that topic that base ideas in mind about the case and the reader's previous knowledge of the text's language (Dewi et al., 2020). Responding to this means that in reading, the readers have to find the messages by connecting the text's topic and their ideas in mind.

Reading is the most critical skill of all for most students of English throughout the world. According to Ahmadi (2017), the teacher has to maximize students' motivation to read English texts by using appropriate strategies and materials to reach reading to comprehend what they read well. Concerning this, some studies showed the fact that reading comprehension is an issue in Indonesia. The research conducted by Lestari (2019) point out some student's weaknesses in reading comprehension based on Indonesian English teacher's opinion. It's like students lack motivation in learning English and lack interaction among students and the teachers. The students did not communicate their difficulties during the lesson. Rashid & Ibrahim's (2018) research has shown a need to use culturally sensitive and content-appropriate materials in English learning and teaching because teaching materials must match the goals, culture, and reading interest and level.

However, the study done by Sholikhah (2019) showed that the English reading level of the students of the senior high school in Indonesia was on the frustration level. It resulted from their insufficient knowledge of the text's content. On the other hand, internationally, the issue of reading also existed for Indonesian students. Moreover, based on PISA 2019, students' reading ability in 2018 is lower than in 2015, from 391 to 371 (Pratiwi, 2019). To add the data of the students' problems in reading, the writer conducted observation in MAN Model Pangkal Pinang and found out that there were few books or reading materials that involved local content in learning English. Whereas students still are more interested and understood the local content than the materials provided by the government. According to Sharif & Yarmohammadi (2017), many EFL textbooks lack explicit local content. Indonesian students tend to communicate in English

when discussing local cultural information with foreigners (English speakers). He argues that a sensitive approach to local cultural texts in teaching English reading, especially for EFL students, makes students motivated because local cultural texts involve familiar topics to students.

World Travel & Tourism Council (2020) notices Indonesia has many potential and exciting tourist places among other ASEAN countries based on The World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC). There were islands, beaches, lakes, mountains, valleys and hills. WTTC also expected that tourism places in Indonesia had increased significantly every year. It adds that Indonesia can promote and invite foreigner tourists by 14.2 % and domestic tourists by 6.3%. The tourism sector can add economic income by 8.1% each year. Therefore, this is the best opportunity for Indonesia to promote and show to the world that Indonesia has the wealthiest tourism places.

It is related to the explanations above, tourism places like beaches, museums, lakes, and waterfall originally from Bangka Island. It can be used as reading materials in EFL teaching for students to keep local identity so that the Bangka Island stories will travel from one generation to the next generation. It will not disappear from its existence as a part of Bangka Island's precious cultures in the middle of the globalization era. Syari (2019) points out the result of the central bureau of statistic Bangka Island, which was 28.03% contribution for local revenue. It means that the tourism places sector contributes to this city when it can be developed well.

Moreover, a study written by Monica & Vianty (2019) points out that by implementing local content-based reading material, the students can improve their reading comprehension and their local content knowledge and motivation in learning. Additionally, local content-based implementation becomes a significant concentration for many researchers both nationally and internationally. Some of the subsequent studies have also found that the use of local content-based materials in teaching is beneficial for EFL students (Sumiati et al., 2020; Efendi, 2014; Satria, 2020; Rodriguez, 2015; Monica & Vianty, 2019, Rashid & Ibrahim, 2018 and Sari, 2020). Responding to this, since there is no study in analyzing the implementation of local content-based reading material located in Pangkalpinang, the writer conducts this study. By including the story of Bangka Island's tourist attractions as a descriptive text based on local content in the ELT material, it is hoped that it can make students more motivated to learn English and learn about their own local culture and content.

LITERATURE REVIEW
Material Development

Materials development refers to producing and using the materials for language learning, including materials evaluation, adaptation, design, production, exploitation and research. The process of teaching and learning is always linked with materials. It can be developed by the government, private publishers, researchers, or teachers. Materials development can be defined as all the processes carried out by practitioners who intend to produce and employ language learning materials. The methods include materials evaluation, adaption, design, production, exploitation, and research (Azarnoosh et al., 2016).

Richards (2021) adds four advantages of developing materials which are presented as (1) relevance: the materials will tend to be more relevant for students and institutional needs and reflect the local content, issues, and concerns; (2) develop expertise: developing materials benefit the other staff's language course to improve their knowledge, giving them a greater understanding of the characteristic of effective materials; (3) reputation: it will show the commitment to the language teaching because of providing relevant, specialized, and contextualized materials for the students; (4) flexibility: the produced materials can be revised or adapted as needed, giving them greater flexibility than a commercial coursebook. The teachers are suggested to enhance their skill not only in teaching but also in developing learning materials. Thus, the students can get as attractive and practical as possible in a learning environment.

Descriptive Text

There are many kinds of text that students have to be mastered. One of them is descriptive. Sartika & Nurdin's (2019) descriptive text describes a particular person, a place, or things. Besides, its purposes are to tell about the subject by describing the features without including personal opinion. Then there are two aspects of the description text. They are identification introduces the thing as the first step in the beginning structure of the descriptive text. Thus, in the identification section, the reader identifies what is the object will appear.

In line with the previous explanation Indriyastuti (2018) points out that identification introducing the thing is a first step to beginning the descriptive text. In short, identification is introducing the first part of this text initially. Description states this section explained physical features, the personality, and the way he/she dresses. This part sets the description itself about any features of the object. Also, the position of the report is to describe the character. It means that this part contains the figure that the writer describes.

Local Content-Based in EFL Context

According to Rodriguez (2015), culture and attitude have also been regarded as one of the primary factors in successful language learning and acquisition. Specifically, the teacher was suggested to construct their materials in line with their student's level with the topic the students familiar with because unfamiliar topics may cause reading difficulties. Hopefully, the learning material's content could be as related as possible to the student's local culture to attract students' interest than those of the target culture.

Additionally, Rashid & Ibrahim (2018) suggest that the local culture source can also encourage students to gain a deeper understanding of their own culture to share their knowledge of their culture when using English with friends from different countries. As text participants, readers connect the texts with their background knowledge, including knowledge of the world, cultural understanding, and knowledge of the generic structure (Ahmadi, 2017). Integrating background knowledge plays an essential role in ELT. It is claimed that background knowledge profoundly influences students' ability to comprehend what they read. It is also supported by a previous study conducted about EFL learners' perception of prior experience and its role in reading comprehension (Satria, 2020).

Malone (2017) adds one of the views supports the use of local culture material. The term used refers to the learner's own culture as content. In the context of this study, this involved using materials that are based on Indonesian society and culture; therefore. It is expected that students or learners would be familiar with it, while the other view proposes that it should be taught in a culture-free context to explore the role of 'culture' in English language teaching. Several empirical studies have been conducted. Moreover, in her research, Sari (2020) emphasizes that it is the urgent need for local teachers to be empowered to develop their materials to facilitate their particular learning and teaching situations to English's international role.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study's developed product refers to instructional reading material; it is ten descriptive texts completing a reading comprehension test focused on tourist destinations in Bangka Island created by the writer in 2018. After the product developed through research and development (R&D), this study was a continued study that was an evaluation phase of the developed product's quality when implemented to society. It is part of *developmental research* procedures. An evaluation phase refers to measuring the quality of intervention (generated outcome) in terms of its validity, practicality, and effectiveness. Since the study's

limited time, this paper only focused on measuring the developed product's effectiveness and validity.

In response to the previous explanation, a field test was conducted at MAN Model Pangkalpinang. This study's population was the tenth-grade students consisting of nine classes in the academic year 2019/2020. Through random cluster sampling, all students of a real class were involved as the study sample, consisting of 41 students. The test was conducted after the implementation of the developed product in the teaching and learning process. The reading comprehension test is constructed in the form of multiple-choice questions. The aspects of reading are main idea, detail, inference, reference, cause, and effect, and vocabulary in context tested. The readability of the texts used in this reading comprehension test was equal to that used in the standardized reading level.

The product can be said effective if the student's score from the reading comprehension test is analyzed using the percentage of the number of students who passed the minimum mastery criterion or *KKM* that was 70. Additionally, to know whether the developed product valid or not used as a reading assessment, the writer correlated student's reading comprehension test score with a standardized test. The developed reading comprehension test was categorized with good criterion-related validity if its correlation coefficient was in the range .50 to .70 and analyzed through SPSS 20.

FINDING

In this study, the authors conducted a reading level analysis first. The results are used to determine the text's legibility that will be used in the product being developed. Besides, it is used to measure the criterion-related validity of refined products in the evaluation phase. Based on the results of this test were described in table 1.

Table 1. The Distribution of Student's Reading Level

Text Level	Reading Stage (The Correct)					
	Frustration (Number=≤6)		Instructional (Number= 7-8)		Independent (Number 9-10)	
	NOS*	%	NOS*	%	NOS*	%
Level 2	0	0%	11	26.83%	30	73.17%
Level 3	4	9.76%	15	36.58%	22	53.66%
Level 4	7	17.07%	32	78.05%	2	4.88%
Level 5	29	70.73%	12	29.27%	0	0%
Level 6	36	87.80%	5	12.20%	0	0%

*NOS= Number of Students

The reading level distribution above means that students were already at an independent stage (73.17%) for text in level 2 and 53.66% for the text in level 3. For the text in level 4, students were at the instructional stage (78.05% of 41 students). Students were at a frustration stage for text in levels 5 and 6, which was 70.73%, 87.80%.

Moreover, after finding the student's reading level, the writer then started to construct descriptive texts and then measured their readability automatically by using an online tool named Automated Readability Index that matched the student's reading level. The results are described in the table below:

Table 2. The Readability Level of the Developed Product

No	Title	Readability Level	Remark
1	Kaolin Lake	2.4	Developed and translated
2	Matras Beach	3.6	
3	Pelawan Forest	4.8	
4	Timah Museum	5.2	
5	Parai Beach	6.3	

After the product developed, the field test was conducted. The writer found that 35 students (85.36%) out of 41 students in reading comprehension tests accomplished the minimum mastery criterion, 75. After the writer got the student's score on the reading level test and reading comprehension test, the reading comprehension test was correlated to their reading level test score. The finding shows a significant correlation between the two sets of the score with the correlation coefficient was 0.618. The writer partially compared the reading comprehension scores (categorized as literal, inferential, and vocabulary) in the reading comprehension test included in the reading level test. The result of coefficients of each element showed a strong correlation which was 0.791 (inferential) and 0.639 (vocabulary), while 0.572 (literal) fell in average correlation.

DISCUSSION

As mentioned in the previous explanation, two sets of tests were administered in this study, firstly reading level test. In this activity, a standardized Independent Reading Inventory was given to the students, which included reading texts at levels 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6. The reason for giving this reading level to the tenth grade is that based on the English teacher reports and student's reading achievement was low. In addition, the previous researchers found that students in the tenth grade were at level four. It can be concluded that student's reading level was at level 4 since the most significant percentage of students who belonged to the instructional group was at level 4.

The reading level test result is used as consideration on deciding which texts to be written as the reading materials and reading comprehension test of descriptive texts. As the student's reading level was at level 4, the writer also provided a certain level and provided two grades below and two levels above the student's reading level. Therefore, the stories' readability levels had to be at levels 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6. There were five texts as a reading comprehension test. This reading comprehension has used an instrument to get the potential effect. Similar to reading materials, reading comprehension tests are then calculated automatically in terms of their readability levels.

As mention in the findings, there were five text reading materials were constructed from Bangka Island. There were Bangka Botanical Garden (level 2.6), Pasir Padi beach (level 3.4), Tirta Tapta Pemali Hot spring (level 4.2), Tanjung Kelayang beach (level 5.8) and Pulau Ketawai (level 6.3). These reading materials have been delivered to the students to determine the practicality of the product. In this term, the questions were in the form of true-false, short answer and essay. After the developed reading test is constructed appropriately according to the student's reading level, it was given to the students in six meeting sessions. At the end of the meeting, the reading comprehension test was given to the students to know whether or not it is significantly effective in improving student's reading comprehension.

Moreover, in their research, Thomas & January (2019) point out that developed reading assessment must have criterion-related validity. It can be determined by measuring the test's correlation with the test which is already standardized. This statement reflects the vital role of criterion-related validity in determining the developed reading assessment quality. Considering this, the writer analyzed the correlation of two sets of scores in this study (reading level test' score and reading comprehension test' score) to found out the criterion-related validity of the product. As mentioned in the findings above, through SPSS 20, there were significantly correlated to standardized test (IRI by Stark), which means the developed reading comprehension tests considered having criterion-related validity. In other words, it shows that a molded product is good if it is used as a reading assessment, especially for reading level four students. The level of difficulties is constructed in grades 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 or two-level below and two levels above of reading level four students that senior high school students in Pangkalpinang mostly have.

The findings were supported by Ahmed (2017) and Monica & Vianty (2019). Those studies show that culturally materials or local content-based reading material effectively can improve student's comprehension. Additionally, it is also revealed can enrich student's knowledge and their learning interest. Further, materials are suggested have to be in line with student's reading local ability

according to student's reading level. If the text readability level matches the student's reading level, it will effectively influence the reader's motivation, knowledge, and interest. The teacher should concern about text readability level and the student language level. The student's level must be related to the text readability level (Hidayat & Rohati, 2020).

CONCLUSION

The products developed are effectively used in ELT. It is indicated by student achievement in reading comprehension tests because most students meet the intended learning standards and the minimum completeness criteria. Besides, the product developed is also considered to have validity related to good criteria, as shown in the correlation coefficient of the two sets of student scores on both the reading level test and the reading comprehension test.

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